

terrorist plot involving John F. Kennedy Airport in New York, a gaping lapse in security in Phoenix, and the arrest of illegal immigrants working at Chicago's O'Hare Airport with expired and false security badges.

And if there is criminal activity, certainly we should be considering the possibility of terrorist activity taking place. We cannot wait for the next security breach to occur for us to take action.

H.R. 1413 attempts to deal with the very real and serious threats that face commercial aviation today. By passing this legislation and appropriating funds to implement it—which are included in the FY08 Homeland Security Appropriations bill—we are acting on the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission to prevent and protect against any possible insider threats.

I know some in labor and industry favor the use of alternative methods and technologies, such as biometrics to increase security at our airports. I am not opposed to biometric technology; however, those technologies do not exist for full implementation today in the aviation sector, and as we have seen with the TWIC card, the delays could last years in rolling out this measure across aviation.

This legislation is not aimed at any specific group of workers, the vast majority of whom are hard-working, law-abiding citizens. Instead it is a bipartisan approach to measure the feasibility and effectiveness of closing this loophole in our airport security.

I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 1413, and I yield back the balance of my time.

TRIBUTE TO ANTHONY IURILLI

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the life and accomplishments of Anthony Iurilli, who passed away on Sunday, November 25, 2007 at age 38 after a long battle with multiple sclerosis.

Mr. Iurilli, known as Tony, exemplified the ideals that many of us aspire to: commitment to education, a love of community service, and devotion to his family and friends.

Tony was blessed with extraordinary athletic talent. He was a 1986 graduate of St. Raymond High School for Boys in the Bronx, where he lettered in both baseball and basketball. In his senior year, he was named to the All-City Baseball Team by three New York metropolitan newspapers—Newsday, the NY Daily News and the NY Post, and he was awarded a New York Yankees Scholarship to Pace University. There, he was the starting shortstop on the baseball team for four years, graduating in 1990 with a solid B average.

Tony's priorities were faith, family, school, and community. After college, he worked as Director of Recreation for HIV/AIDS patients at Bronx Lebanon Hospital, and he taught American history, health, and physical education at St. Helena's elementary school in the Bronx. He then returned to his alma mater, St. Ray's, to teach American history and health education, and to foster the athletic abilities of students who followed in his path. He coached the school's varsity and junior varsity bowling teams, and he served as the head junior var-

sity baseball coach and the assistant varsity baseball coach. As JV basketball coach, he led the St. Raymond's Ravens to Catholic High School All-City championships in 2003 and 2005.

While at St. Raymond, Tony was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a disease that may have crippled his body, but never his mind or spirit. Last summer, he served as best man at his beloved brother Frank's wedding in New York before moving to Florida for medical treatment. He returned to St. Ray's to be honored by faculty, alumni, and friends at a benefit dinner in mid-October.

Madam Speaker, this is a difficult time for all those who knew and loved Tony Iurilli. It is my hope that they will be strengthened by the memory of his selflessness, his bright smile, and his wonderful spirit.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Tony's all too brief, but wonderful life of commitment and community service.

RECOGNIZING TYLER EVAN ARTHUR FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Tyler Evan Arthur, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Tyler has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Tyler has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Tyler Arthur for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

RECOGNIZING THE WALTON COUNTY 2007 OUTSTANDING FARM FAMILY OF THE YEAR

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise today to extend congratulations to the Kenneth Pridgen family for being selected the Walton County 2007 Outstanding Farm Family of the Year. More than one generation of involvement in agriculture has led this farm family to serve as a model of stewardship to society through a vitally important industry.

The Pridgen family is more than deserving of this year's award. Kenneth's father was himself raised working in agriculture, and he passed on the significance of their industry to his son, who in turn has involved his family in this work. Kenneth and his family recognize

the contribution that agriculture makes to all of society, including putting food on the tables of families throughout the entire country.

Every year, the North Florida Fair Association honors farm families in counties throughout North Florida that display leadership through farming techniques and agricultural production. The Farm Family of the Year award conveys the importance of farm families' contributions to some of society's largest needs including food, clothing, and building supplies. Recognition of their work, as conveyed by this award, encourages others in the community to become involved and support local agriculture as well.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to offer my sincere commendation to a family that is a role model for all of us. A deep sense of civic contribution and values has been instilled in all of the Kenneth Pridgen family. It is my hope that this family tradition continues for many future generations.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY IN MEDICARE MARKETING ACT OF 2007

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Ms. CASTOR. Madam Speaker, I am proud today to introduce the Accountability and Transparency in Medicare Marketing Act of 2007. This legislation will serve as a companion bill to S. 1883, introduced in the Senate by Mr. HERB KOHL.

With recent reports from the Government Accountability Office addressing the failure of CMS to audit Medicare Advantage providers along with recent reports of marketing abuses and fraudulent practices aimed at seniors, this legislation is timely and imperative.

We have heard reports that many Medicare providers seek to mislead seniors for private financial gain. In fact, seniors are frequently confronted with such practices as cold calling, misleading sales pitches to purchase unnecessary products, or being pushed to enroll in private Medicare Advantage programs that are not within their best interests.

WellCare Health Plans, which is headquartered in my hometown of Tampa, was raided by the FBI in October for suspected fraudulent practices. WellCare is among the largest national providers of Medicare and Medicaid managed care plans with 2.3 million members nationwide.

Three quarters of states have reported complaints about inappropriate or confusing marketing practices which lead Medicare beneficiaries to enroll in private plans without adequately understanding the consequences of their decision or that Medicare Advantage is optional.

Some seniors have lost access to their regular doctors after signing up for a private plan that their doctor does not accept. However, when sold the plan, the private company assured that this would not occur.

Frighteningly, some providers have been accused of selling to seniors with dementia and using scare tactics to force beneficiaries to enroll. Others have been offered cash incentives for enrolling.

All of these scams and efforts to mislead seniors for private financial gain are a result of the lack of standardized regulations and real accountability. It has been reported that the government pays private Medicare Advantage insurers an average of \$9,000 a year for each person enrolled. Private insurance agents receive between \$350 and \$600 commission for each person they enroll. With nearly nine million Americans currently enrolled in these private plans, the profits going to these insurers and away from America's health care system is astronomical.

Without a standard method used for regulation, the financial gain of private insurers will continue to rise at the health expense of seniors and the personal and financial stress of all Americans.

We must implement transparency requirements that will ensure companies are held accountable and publicly identified, in the event of marketing abuses. The Accountability and Transparency in Medicare Marketing Act of 2007 will address all of these issues. It will create standardized marketing practices to be enforced by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). These standard practices will exclude telemarketing and cold calling, deceptive selling and other abusive practices.

This bill will create transparency by requiring that all violations be reported to the Secretary of Health and Human Services and in turn reported to Congress.

Additionally, this legislation will require the NAIC to create a committee to study and make recommendations to the Secretary and Congress on the establishment of standardized benefit packages for Medicare Advantage plans.

This legislation will help us to continue our effort to make Medicare safe, beneficial and accountable to our seniors, family care givers and all Americans. It will enforce regulations that will demand ethical and helpful tactics. It will alleviate private insurers unfairly benefiting from the hard-earned dollars of all American families. Further, we will provide seniors and family care givers with the protection and care that they deserve. It is our responsibility to keep fraud and unethical practices from plaguing our health care system, and the Accountability and Transparency in Medicare Marketing Act of 2007 seeks to help us step up to this duty.

COMMEMORATING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COLLAPSE OF THE SILVER BRIDGE

HON. CHARLES A. WILSON

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate one of the worst infrastructure disasters this Nation has ever seen. On December 15, 1967, at about 5 p.m., the Silver Bridge collapsed. It spanned the Ohio River from Gallia County in my district to Mason County West Virginia. That disastrous accident killed 46 people. Most of them had just left work and were headed home. This horrible tragedy, which was the result of the failure of a single eye-bar supporting the bridge, spurred Congressional ac-

tion that led to the first federal bridge inspection requirements.

Madam Speaker, I wish I could announce today that our nation wisely learned the lesson of the Silver Bridge Collapse. Unfortunately, the more recent collapse of the I-35 bridge in Minneapolis shows just how much our infrastructure has decayed because of inadequate investment. While I am glad that the appropriations bill we passed last night includes investment in bridges, I am convinced that much more work needs to be done.

On this 40th anniversary, let us take a moment to remember the 46 people killed in the Silver Bridge collapse. Even 40 years after the disaster, their absence is felt by their families and communities. Let us resolve today to honor their memories by doing all we can to ensure that the bridges, tunnels and roads that make up our nation's byways are safe and secure.

TRIBUTE TO THE CITY OF MCLEANSBORO, ILLINOIS

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the city of McLeansboro, Illinois upon receiving the Governor's Cup Award for efforts to build a youth playground in the city park.

The Kids Kingdom Playground was made possible thanks to a donation by the Jerry and Bobbye Sloan Hand-in-Hand Foundation as well as thousands of volunteer hours. I have had the opportunity to visit the Kids Kingdom Playground with Coach Sloan and I can attest that this is an excellent addition to the park for the McLeansboro community.

This project is a shining example of the willingness of a community to work together for the greater good. I extend my gratitude to those who made this playground a reality. I am pleased to congratulate the city of McLeansboro and all those who made the Kids Kingdom Playground possible.

HONORING THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM AT BARTOW HIGH SCHOOL

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. PUTNAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the International Baccalaureate School at Bartow High School in Florida's 12th Congressional District for being recognized as a gold medal school in U.S. News & World Report's first ever ranking of America's Best High Schools.

U.S. News & World Report analyzed over 18,000 public schools across the United States in an effort to find the top 100 public schools. They used a three-step analysis to sort through the many schools taking into consideration how each school's students performed on state tests, evaluating how well each school's disadvantaged students performed, and looking at whether the school was successful in providing college-level

coursework. Bartow's IB School placed third among the 100 other gold medal schools. This is quite an accomplishment and I commend the school for leading the way in excellence and for their commitment to empowering young minds.

Bartow High School has a rich history of providing a high caliber education. Distinguished from other high schools in Polk County and from most high schools in Florida, its origin began in 1887 as the Summerlin Institute. Bartow High School is proudly 117 years old and because of its history and tradition, many of its former students have gone on to achieve great success.

Included in this list are distinguished leaders from various professions. Spenssard Holland served as Florida's Governor in the 1940s and as a U.S. Senator from 1946-1970. Army General James Alward Van Fleet served as a commander and led major campaigns in WWII and the Korean War, and President Truman once remarked that he was America's "greatest general." In addition, Kenneth Jerome Riley was honored as a Rhodes Scholar Candidate while attending Florida A&M University and went on to play as an NFL defensive back for the Cincinnati Bengals.

In 1996, Bartow High School embarked on its next endeavor when the school was selected by the International Baccalaureate World School program to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma program. Students that attend the IB School are challenged with increased expectations in both academic and community involvement, and because of this they graduate ready to compete and enter into a fast-paced world that offers endless opportunities.

The IB School's mission is "to ensure each student has the opportunity to achieve his or her potential and creatively influence society by providing students with an advanced international curriculum." Today, it is my honor to commend Dr. Edwin Vetter and his staff of extraordinary educators, including some who shaped my classroom experience, for their dedication and hard work. It is clear that the commitment by both staff and students surpasses their mission, as the IB School continues to be recognized for its performance, not only in the State of Florida, but across the nation too. As an alumnus of Bartow High School, which hosts the IB school, I look forward to their many future accomplishments.

RECOGNIZING COREY DYLAN JEPSON FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, December 18, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Corey D. Jepson, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Corey has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Corey has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.